

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A video-on-demand (VOD) system is disclosed and method for providing a real-time VOD experience using Tempo-Differential file transfer with various buffering techniques and an adaptive file distribution system. The system is configured to populate users' Set-Top-Boxes (STBs) with a set of videos which correspond to the individual user's preferences, and populates a Central Office Storage (COS) server with a larger set of videos based on an analysis of all of the users' preferences. The system thus provides a real time VOD service by either correctly predicting the videos that a user will request and preloading them onto that user's STB, or by delivering the requested video from the COS to the STB using a Tempo-Differential file transfer which delays the playing of the requested video while video trailers or other information is displayed on the video screen. When using a DSL connection to the COS, only a portion of the requested video needs to be buffered on the STB before the requested video begins playing. Accordingly, by predicting which videos a user will request and by using the Temp-Differential file transfer, a real time VOD experience is achieved.